



Town of Westford Massachusetts

Town Manager's Newsletter

March 2020



Jodi Ross,
Town
Manager

jross@westfordma.gov
www.westfordma.gov/tm

Important:

Please sign up to
receive updates on the
latest road construction
in town.

[Subscribe to
Notifications](#)



Sign up for Westford's
new Emergency
Notification service:
[Smart 911](#)

Important Information
from the
Council on Aging about
Available Senior Services
and Westford Food Pantry
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Annual Town Meeting
Postponed until
Saturday, May 2, 2020



Watch
Meetings Online



www.westfordcat.org

Dear Westford residents,

What a difference a month makes! As all of you know, the novel Coronavirus, or COVID-19 has swiftly become the most pressing situation facing our town, our nation, and our world. We are doing our best to protect and serve our residents, our town officials and our staff. We closed our municipal buildings to the public on Friday, March 13th, as well as public schools. Town operations continue and we are encouraging our residents and others to either call or email our departments directly. All board and committee meetings are being held virtually. Many will be broadcast live by WCAT on their website, Youtube page, and local government cable channels. Select Board Chair, Elizabeth Almeida, shared this [letter](#) regarding the coronavirus situation with our community on March 15th.

We continue to provide most services except those requiring attendance in buildings or with more than 10 people at a time. We will be reviewing the situation daily and providing updates to the Select Board weekly on Tuesday evenings at 7pm. Instructions on how to participate or call into these meetings will be listed on each agenda. I did review the impacts on residents at the last joint Select Board/ Board of Health Meeting on March 17th. You may view that meeting here: [3/17 Virtual Meeting](#) and the action taken at the following link: [3/17 Action Taken](#). We are attempting to update our website westfordma.gov daily. You may also follow the Town Manager's Facebook page at: [Town Manager Ross' Facebook Page](#). Our town local emergency radio station is operating at 1630AM.

Our Annual Town Meeting has been postponed until May 2nd at this time. You should have received your Finance Committee booklets. Please hold onto those for when our town meeting is actually held. We will continue our hearings and preparations for town meeting when we have a clearer idea if this will occur on May 2nd. Generally I summarize the articles in the March Newsletter, but I am going to delay this for now. All documents are available at this link for those who would like to review: [2020 Annual Town Meeting](#).

The Select Board recently approved a Transportation Hardship Policy for employment, medical services, and necessary errands for Westford residents with transportation hardship. To view the full policy online, you may click here: [Transportation Hardship Policy](#). For more information or to schedule a ride, you may contact the Council on Aging at (978) 692-5523.

Our Annual Town Election is still scheduled for May 5th, 2020, however our Select Board is reviewing options. You may view who is running for what positions at this link: [Open Positions and Candidates](#).

Select Board member Tom Clay, SB Liaison to WestfordCAT, has continued to update the board regarding WestfordCAT's board meetings and actions. At the SB meeting on March 10th, he reviewed WCAT's 2019 Financial Summary. Anyone who is interested in joining the WCAT board, or getting further information may find it at this link: [WestfordCAT](#).

(Continued on next page)

WWW.WESTFORDMA.GOV

On March 11th, a public information meeting was held jointly with the board and the Permanent Town Building Committee (PTBC) regarding the new Center Building to be located at 51 Main Street. All presentations and design plans are available on the PTBC's website and can be accessed by clicking here: [New Center Building](#).

Additionally, the board approved amendments to the Westford Fire Department Ambulance Billing Collection Policy. You may view the updated policy at this link: [Ambulance Billing Policy](#).

After an extremely successful market last year, the Westford Farmer's Market is planning to return this summer and will now be managed by The Roudenbush Community Center, Inc. (TRCCI). TRCCI received approval to hold the market on the Town Common on Tuesdays, July 7 through August 25. If you are interested in attending as a vendor, you can contact Avery Adam to apply at (978) 496-1707 or email aadam@roudenbush.org.


I am happy to welcome our newest town employees Brett Lafosse, Peter Imhof, David Ricard, and Michael Calthorpe on the Fire Department, and Public Safety Dispatcher Tara Sheehan!

There are several openings on our local boards and committees, including: 12 North Main Street Task Force, 35 Town Farm Road Task Force, Affordable Housing Committee, Agricultural Commission, Board of Water Commissioners, Commission on Disability, Communications Advisory Committee, Conservation Commission, Cultural Council, Election Officer, Energy Committee, Healthy Westford Committee, Historical Commission, Nashoba Valley Technical High School District Committee, Parkerville Schoolhouse Committee, Parks, Grounds and Recreation Commission, Pedestrian Safety Committee, Permanent Town Building Committee, Westford Scholarship and Grant Committee, and Zoning Board of Appeals. I urge you to peruse our website for information about the work of these committees; and if you have interest, please complete a Citizen's Activity form at this link: [Citizen Activity Form](#).

Would you like more detailed information on Board of Selectmen meetings? Click the following links to access: [Board of Selectmen Documents](#) & [Board of Selectmen Meeting Videos](#).

Please everyone, take care of yourselves, your loved ones, your neighbors, your friends and everyone else who needs assistance, following the instructions provided to us by our federal, state and local officials. We will get through this together and become an even stronger community in the future.

Sincerely,



Jodi Ross
Town Manager

TOWN OF WESTFORD BOARD OF HEALTH

TOWN HALL

WESTFORD, MASSACHUSETTS 01886
(978)692-5509 Fax (978) 399 2558



March 19, 2020

Dear Residents,

As many of you may know, there is a global pandemic of a respiratory disease caused by a new, or novel, strain of coronavirus known as COVID-19. As testing across Massachusetts and the United States continues and increases, new CDC data has shown that nearly **40 percent of the patients hospitalized with COVID-19 are age 20-54.** This data should serve as a reminder that **all residents** are susceptible to COVID-19 and all residents must do their part to protect the community.

The Health Department and Town are working to mitigate the spread of this virus with every reasonable measure. I would like to stress that all measures taken in Town are critical to help limit the spread of COVID-19, but the only way these protections will work is if you **do your part!**

- **Stay at home if you can** (except to get medical care and shop for essential provisions).
- **Protect our Senior Population. They are still most vulnerable.**
- **Practice social distancing. Keep 6 feet away from others to reduce risk of infection.**
- **Keep kids out of playgrounds.**
- **Avoid all unnecessary travel.**
- **Avoid public transportation and avoid large crowds.**
- **Wash your hands with soap and warm water for at least 20 seconds frequently.**
- **Avoid private gatherings all together.**
- **Wear a mask if you are sick.**
- **Contact the Health Department at 978-692-5509 if your doctor directs you to.**
- **Call 2-1-1 on your phone for additional information.**

In an overabundance of caution, the Health Department and Town are **temporarily closing ALL Town playgrounds until further notice** to help mitigate the spread of this virus. As information unfolds, we will notify you of any changes. I would like to stress that all measures taken in Town are critical to help limit the spread of COVID-19, but the only way these protections will work is if you help by staying safe. I appreciate your understanding in these unprecedented difficult times.

Stay calm and thank you for taking responsibility and doing what you can to help contain this virus. Prevention does work and together we can help protect our community. We will get through this! For additional guidance, go to:

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/summary.html#situation-in-us>

https://www.whitehouse.gov/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/03.16.20_coronavirus-guidance_8.5x11_315PM.pdf

<https://www.mass.gov/resource/information-on-the-outbreak-of-coronavirus-disease-2019-covid-19>

<https://westfordma.gov/covid-19>

<https://mass211.org>

Sincerely,

Jeffrey Stephens, R.S., CP-FS
Health Director
Westford Health Department

Health Department (continued)

THE PRESIDENT'S **CORONAVIRUS GUIDELINES** FOR AMERICA

15 DAYS TO SLOW THE SPREAD

Listen to and follow the directions of your **STATE AND LOCAL AUTHORITIES**.

IF YOU FEEL SICK, stay home. Do not go to work. Contact your medical provider.

IF YOUR CHILDREN ARE SICK, keep them at home. Do not send them to school. Contact your medical provider.

IF SOMEONE IN YOUR HOUSEHOLD HAS TESTED POSITIVE for the coronavirus, keep the entire household at home. Do not go to work. Do not go to school. Contact your medical provider.

IF YOU ARE AN OLDER PERSON, stay home and away from other people.

IF YOU ARE A PERSON WITH A SERIOUS UNDERLYING HEALTH CONDITION that can put you at increased risk (for example, a condition that impairs your lung or heart function or weakens your immune system), stay home and away from other people.

**CORONAVIRUS.GOV**

DO YOUR PART TO SLOW THE SPREAD



Do work and school **from home**



If you work in a critical infrastructure industry, **keep your normal work schedule** and follow CDC guidance



Avoid social gatherings of 10+ people



Practice **good hygiene**



Use **drive-thru, pickup, or food delivery** options



Avoid nonessential travel, shopping trips, and social visits



Do not visit nursing homes or long-term care facilities unless to provide critical help

Health Department (continued)

THE PRESIDENT'S CORONAVIRUS GUIDELINES FOR AMERICA

DO YOUR PART TO SLOW THE SPREAD OF THE CORONAVIRUS

Even if you are young, or otherwise healthy, you are at risk and your activities can increase the risk for others. It is critical that you do your part to slow the spread of the coronavirus.

Work or engage in schooling **FROM HOME** whenever possible.

IF YOU WORK IN A CRITICAL INFRASTRUCTURE INDUSTRY, as defined by the Department of Homeland Security, such as healthcare services and pharmaceutical and food supply, you have a special responsibility to maintain your normal work schedule. You and your employers should follow CDC guidance to protect your health at work.

AVOID SOCIAL GATHERINGS in groups of more than 10 people.

Avoid eating or drinking at bars, restaurants, and food courts — **USE DRIVE-THRU, PICKUP, OR DELIVERY OPTIONS.**

AVOID DISCRETIONARY TRAVEL, shopping trips, and social visits.

DO NOT VISIT nursing homes or retirement or long-term care facilities unless to provide critical assistance.

PRACTICE GOOD HYGIENE:

- Wash your hands, especially after touching any frequently used item or surface.
- Avoid touching your face.
- Sneeze or cough into a tissue, or the inside of your elbow.
- Disinfect frequently used items and surfaces as much as possible.

CORONAVIRUS.GOV

School operations can accelerate the spread of the coronavirus. Governors of states with evidence of community transmission should close schools in affected and surrounding areas. Governors should close schools in communities that are near areas of community transmission, even if those areas are in neighboring states. In addition, state and local officials should close schools where coronavirus has been identified in the population associated with the school. States and localities that close schools need to address childcare needs of critical responders, as well as the nutritional needs of children.

Older people are particularly at risk from the coronavirus. All states should follow Federal guidance and halt social visits to nursing homes and retirement and long-term care facilities.

In states with evidence of community transmission, bars, restaurants, food courts, gyms, and other indoor and outdoor venues where groups of people congregate should be closed.

Stop the Spread of Germs

Help prevent the spread of respiratory diseases like the flu and COVID-19:



Wash your hands often with soap and warm water, or use an alcohol-based gel.



Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth.



Clean things that are frequently touched (like doorknobs and countertops) with household cleaning spray or wipes.



Cover your mouth when you cough or sneeze. Use a tissue or your inner elbow, not your hands.



Stay home if you are sick and avoid close contact with others.



Think ahead about how to take care of yourself and your loved ones if the virus starts spreading in the community. Visit mass.gov/KnowPlanPrepare for a preparedness checklist.

What to do if you are sick with coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19)

If you are sick with COVID-19 or suspect you are infected with the virus that causes COVID-19, follow the steps below to help prevent the disease from spreading to people in your home and community.

Stay home except to get medical care

You should restrict activities outside your home, except for getting medical care. Do not go to work, school, or public areas. Avoid using public transportation, ride-sharing, or taxis.

Separate yourself from other people and animals in your home

People: As much as possible, you should stay in a specific room and away from other people in your home. Also, you should use a separate bathroom, if available.

Animals: Do not handle pets or other animals while sick. See [COVID-19 and Animals](#) for more information.

Call ahead before visiting your doctor

If you have a medical appointment, call the healthcare provider and tell them that you have or may have COVID-19. This will help the healthcare provider's office take steps to keep other people from getting infected or exposed.

Wear a facemask

You should wear a facemask when you are around other people (e.g., sharing a room or vehicle) or pets and before you enter a healthcare provider's office. If you are not able to wear a facemask (for example, because it causes trouble breathing), then people who live with you should not stay in the same room with you, or they should wear a facemask if they enter your room.

Cover your coughs and sneezes

Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when you cough or sneeze. Throw used tissues in a lined trash can; immediately wash your hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds or clean your hands with an alcohol-based hand sanitizer that contains at least 60-95% alcohol covering all surfaces of your hands and rubbing them together until they feel dry. Soap and water should be used preferentially if hands are visibly dirty.

Avoid sharing personal household items

You should not share dishes, drinking glasses, cups, eating utensils, towels, or bedding with other people or pets in your home. After using these items, they should be washed thoroughly with soap and water.

Clean your hands often

Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. If soap and water are not available, clean your hands with an alcohol-based hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol, covering all surfaces of your hands and rubbing them together until they feel dry. Soap and water should be used preferentially if hands are visibly dirty. Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.

Clean all "high-touch" surfaces every day

High touch surfaces include counters, tabletops, doorknobs, bathroom fixtures, toilets, phones, keyboards, tablets, and bedside tables. Also, clean any surfaces that may have blood, stool, or body fluids on them. Use a household cleaning spray or wipe, according to the label instructions. Labels contain instructions for safe and effective use of the cleaning product including precautions you should take when applying the product, such as wearing gloves and making sure you have good ventilation during use of the product.

Monitor your symptoms

Seek prompt medical attention if your illness is worsening (e.g., difficulty breathing). **Before** seeking care, call your healthcare provider and tell them that you have, or are being evaluated for, COVID-19. Put on a facemask before you enter the facility. These steps will help the healthcare provider's office to keep other people in the office or waiting room from getting infected or exposed.

Ask your healthcare provider to call the local or state health department. Persons who are placed under active monitoring or facilitated self-monitoring should follow instructions provided by their local health department or occupational health professionals, as appropriate.

If you have a medical emergency and need to call 911, notify the dispatch personnel that you have, or are being evaluated for COVID-19. If possible, put on a facemask before emergency medical services arrive.

Discontinuing home isolation

Patients with confirmed COVID-19 should remain under home isolation precautions until the risk of secondary transmission to others is thought to be low. The decision to discontinue home isolation precautions should be made on a case-by-case basis, in consultation with healthcare providers and state and local health departments.



CS 314937-D 03/05/2020

This is the printer friendly version. For more information:
www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov

Cameron Senior Center

What your Cameron staff are doing to ensure our older adults are healthy, engaged and safe during COVID-19

The Cameron is currently being staffed during regular hours of operation from 8am-4pm to answer phone calls, carry out essential services and address additional needs as we learn more. However, we have split our staff into two teams one team will work remotely from home while the other works from the COA. We will alternate our teams each day with one team working from home and the other reporting to the center. This process of alternating teams between working remotely or at the COA will help ensure the health of our staff, continuity of services and programs.

What your Cameron staff is doing at this time for our older adult community age 55 and over:

1. We are calling residents on Special Population Emergency Registry List to share additional services the COA is offering due to COVID-19 and helping to address any unmet needs or concerns at this time. This task is also being supported by volunteers of the Towns Medical Reserve Corp volunteers. This will be an ongoing process and if you would like to be added to this list please call our center and we will be glad to check on you in days to come.
2. Social Services is being done by phone and only critical home visits.
3. Grocery shopping and prescription delivery are available for seniors or people with health conditions that make shopping more risky. This service is provided by the Cameron and Merrimack Valley Reserve Corps volunteers. For more info. please call Alison Christopher, Town Social Worker at 978-399-2325 or Annette Cerullo, Outreach Coordinator at 978-399-2326.
4. Coordinating efforts with Lisa Larrabe Westford Housing Authority Director and David Hedison, Chelmsford Housing Authority Director. Please see attached flier that authorities are distributing to each resident concerning COA outreach services. This information is also being translated into Mandarin by Town resident, Grace Justing.
5. SHINE – Health Insurance Assistance (phone consultation.)
6. Meals on Wheels deliveries are continuing to be done if interested in receiving this donation based service please call Elder Services of Merrimack Valley at 1-800-892-0890.
7. Transportation to medical appointments, grocery shopping, pharmacy and other essential needs. Vans are limited to no more than four riders at a time to ensure social distancing. Dispatcher is screening riders at booking of ride for sickness and if indicating symptomatic rider requesting a ride will be redirected to call 911 for ride assistance.
8. Medical Equipment Loaning – equipment will be left outdoors for pickup.
9. Westford Food Pantry – prebagged food will be given at the Cameron entry door during normal Food Pantry hours. Please check the Westford Food Pantry website calendar for hours.
www.westfordfoodpantry.org
10. Continue to update COA website and social messaging with new resources and updated information to better assist residents during this COVID-19 pandemic. See current messaging on next page.

(Continued on next page)

Cameron Senior Center (continued)

Financial Relief During COVID-19

For additional information on COVID-19, including town news and other resources to support residents, visit www.westfordma.gov.

Also please be aware that this is a quickly evolving situation and you are encouraged to visit companies' and agencies' websites or contact them directly with specific questions.

Due to high call volumes and demand, it is recommended that you visit websites for information prior to emailing or calling.

Utilities (gas, electric, phone, cable, internet, etc.):

- Currently the Department of Public Utilities has prohibited electric and gas companies from making shut off determinations until the state of emergency is lifted or until further notice from DPU. This seems to apply even to customers who were not previously identified as low income. Please call or visit your providers' websites to stay informed. If questions arise call Alison Christopher at 978-399-2325 and she will reach out to the Utility Advocacy Group.
- [Fuel Assistance is accepting applications for low-income households through at least April 1st.](#) Please call Alison or Annette if you need to apply and we will inform of when applications are being taken at Community Teamwork or in our offices.

Food:

- Maintain social distancing by exploring grocery and prescription delivery options. Note that many local businesses are reducing or eliminating fees during this time. The Senior Center is offering to take shopping lists and forward lists to Merrimack Valley Reserve Corps volunteers to shop for seniors or people with health conditions that make shopping riskier.
- Homebound seniors (60+) can temporarily request Meals on Wheels. If you are interested in this, please call 800-892-0890 to inquire with Elder Services of Merrimack Valley or call Alison or Annette. These meals are billed monthly and are very inexpensive/free to those who can't pay.
- Westford Food Pantry is doing their best to remain open and support the public by passing out pre-made bags outside the Cameron. Please visit their website at westfordfoodpantry.org for updates.
- Seoul Kitchen has offered to deliver food free of charge to seniors or residents in need.
- For those in need, including those who may have changes in eligibility due to lost wages, consider applying for: Food Stamps/SNAP-application and eligibility guidelines can be found on the [Massachusetts DTA website](#). If you have questions call Alison or Annette at 978-399-2325 or 978-399-2326.
- [Women, Infants and Children \(WIC\)](#)-Call Community Teamwork at 978-459-0551.
- **Our local supermarkets are providing Senior Shopping hours and they are as follows:**
Market Basket, Littleton Rd, Westford. - 5:30 AM - 7:00 AM - Tues, Wed, Thurs.
Wholefoods, Littleton Rd, Westford. - 8:00 AM - 9:00 AM - 7 days a week.
Shaw's, Boston Road, Groton - 7:00 AM - 9:00 AM - 7 days a week.

(Continued on next page)

Cameron Senior Center (continued)

Time Out of Work:

This is a constantly evolving situation. Keep informed of state and federal guidelines and legislative changes. If you need to be out of work due to illness, risk of illness to yourself or family, etc., consider the following:

- Talk to your employer about using paid time off
- Talk to your employer about other creative approaches, such as working remotely or adapting approach to job responsibility if applicable
- Understand your short-term disability policy
- Ask your employer about other supports available
- If your job offers it, consult the Employee Assistance Program (EAP) for free confidential supports, including but not limited to counseling, legal advice and other resources.
- For seniors or low-income individuals with questions about legal rights, Northeast Legal Aid is providing service by pre-arranged appointment only. To apply for assistance please call Monday through Friday 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. at 978-458-1465.
- [Visit the Department of Labor website for information on your rights and on the Family Medical Leave Act \(FMLA\)](#)
- [For information on Federal changes to employment insurance coverage during COVID-19, visit the Department of Labor website and also the Massachusetts Executive Office of Labor and Workforce Development for the impact of federal changes on state law.](#)

Assistance Paying Bills:

- St. Vincent de Paul is a Catholic organization that supports people in need of emergency financial support, regardless of their religious beliefs. They are currently only meeting with emergency cases to protect their volunteers, but they can speak with you by phone to determine your level of need and create a plan on when they can meet with you/interim assistance they can provide. Call and leave your name and number at 978-692-6353x134.
- [Community Teamwork in Lowell has limited funding to help prevent housing loss during times of financial crisis, including RAFT and RAFT Upstream funding. Their Housing Consumer Education Center can also answer questions about housing concerns.](#) You can reach them at 978-459-0551.
- Seniors may call Alison or Annette and inquire about applying for assistance through the Friends Emergency Fund.

Please remember our staff is available Monday thru Friday from 8-4 at the center if you need to talk, would like to receive a check-in phone call daily, seeking answers concerning Cameron or Town services or more just dial 978-692-5523.

- We are here for You!

Town Clerk's Corner

The Town Clerk's Office is endeavoring to continue to serve residents with everything they have come to expect. During this time that the Town Hall is closed to the public, many things can be done through the mail or going online at <https://www.westfordma.gov/255/Town-Clerk> to order vital records, dog licenses and obtain any information pertaining to town meeting and elections. Please call us at 978-692-5515 with any questions.

Annual Town Meeting: Postponed until Saturday, May 2, 2020

Annual Town Election: Tuesday, May 5, 2020

We are not providing notary service during this time of closure.

Marriage intentions – Please call to make arrangements.

Set your radio presets to Westford's Local
Emergency Management Radio **AM 1630**
For Emergency Information



Town News Subscription Manager



Notify Me®

The town's website can notify subscribers of new items.

Please visit www.westfordma.gov/list.aspx and follow the simple instructions to sign up for the various feeds available. You will receive email from us to confirm each thing you sign up for, and you need to click the link in each of those emails before it will start working. This confirmation process provided security ensuring that only you can change your notification settings.

While visiting the website consider setting up a profile account. This allows you to gather feeds from the website into a custom portal and as we implement some of the new features of the site you will be able to save data and track the progress of your interactions with the town.

J.V. Fletcher Library

The Director and staff of the J.V. Fletcher Library continue to monitor Covid-19 alerts and are following the guidance of the state and town.

During this tumultuous time, we do not want you to worry about your library items. While we are currently closed to the public, we ask that you hold onto your library items. Due dates have been extended through May 15.

Delivery of hold items has been suspended.

Please reach out to us with any questions at westfordlibrary@westfordma.gov. Our [website](#) is the best place to see updates but you may also follow us on Facebook and Twitter.

Digital Collections Accessible with Your Library Card!

If you need your library card number or pin, please contact us at westfordlibrary@westfordma.gov and we will be happy to assist you.

If you are a Westford resident and would like to access our digital collections but don't have a Library card, please contact us westfordlibrary.org.

[Hoopla](#) – **NEW!** Download movies, e-books, audiobooks, comics, music, and ebooks. There are no waiting lists on Hoopla. The collection includes titles for kids, teens, and adults.

[Overdrive](#): Download e-books, audiobooks, and magazines with Overdrive. The collection includes titles for kids, teens, and adults and also offers Chinese language titles.

[Kanopy](#): Stream documentaries, independent and art house films, The Criterion Collection, The Great Courses and many resources for children through the Kanopy Kids link.

[Freegal](#): Stream or download free music with Freegal.

[Safari Books](#): Access videos and the full text of books in the areas of business, technology, and digital media.

[Tumblebooks](#): Access the best in children's e-picture books, graphic novels, "readalongs", and so much more!

[JVF Databases](#): Check out our large collection of databases to learn a language, take an online course, access the latest news articles, start a genealogy project, search residential and business directories, and many other resources.

[BPL e-card](#): The Boston Public Library provides a free e-card to all Massachusetts residents. With the e-card you will have immediate access to all of their remote online databases and collections.

Recycling Commission

Our Westford Recycling Got Audited Last Month – So what happened?



In last month's newsletter we talked about the recent composition audit by Waste Management to see just what constitutes the recyclables coming from Westford and what our percentage of contamination is.

Westford is charged for our recycling according to the volume of the various materials we send to Waste Management. And we are penalized for contamination – which is food or other waste, and simply put, stuff that's just not supposed to be in there.

The audit ran for 11 days in late January and early February, and Westford recycling volunteers put in over 30 hours witnessing the sorting by Waste Management personnel, to ensure accurate results.

And what results!

Contamination - Westford has been paying based on a 10% contamination rate, the average for the state. In July of last year, when our 5-year contract with Waste Management began, this was set as the default. Through this audit, the actual contamination percentage was shown to be less - 8.41%. That doesn't sound like much, but those savings will add up over time for the town.

Composition – The volume of materials like cardboard, steel/tin cans and glass factor into our charges, since some of these materials have more market value on the back end for Waste Management and some, in the current climate, have little to no value.

Our audit showed we have more cardboard, less glass, and more of some plastics than what was being assumed, which could lead to further savings.

The bottom line –these audit results mean \$3,500 in savings to our town each month!

At 92% "good" recycling, Westfordites are doing a great job.

But how could we do even better? Here are pictures of items that were found in our recycling that are not accepted by Waste Management.



If you question whether to throw something into your bin, look it up at: recyclesmartma.org/
We thank you for being a smart recycler.